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BOOK REVIEWS.

SOME RECENT SPANISH PLAYS.

Téllez's Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes. Edited, with Introduction, Notes, and Vocabulary, by B. P. BOURLAND. New York: Henry Holt & Co. Pp. i-xxvii, 1-118 (text), 119-44 (notes), 145-98 (vocabulary).

FRAY GABRIEL TÉLLEZ, better known to literary fame as Tirso de Molina, is one of the notable figures of the classical period of Spanish letters, and is a shining dramatic light that is not thrown into the shade even when standing by the side of the great luminaries of the period—Lope and Calderón. He possessed a marvelous literary facility, and like those prodigies of nature, although fortunately in a smaller degree, he is credited with an appalling dramatic output, some three or four hundred plays being put down to his authorship. Such a mass of letters—even if only a fraction of them have appeared in print—is a pretty heavy load under which to ride down to posterity, and Tirso himself has had to rest for a spell by the wayside, in partial neglect, to recuperate after the high reputation he enjoyed during his day. Yet certain of his plays claim without dispute the first rank in the classic literary roster of Spain, and the work and personality of the author cannot be ignored by the well-informed student of Spanish letters.

In view of these facts, and considering the lack of a good available edition of Tirso, Professor Bourland has done us a distinct service in presenting us with his scholarly edition of our author's well-known and characteristic play, *Don Gil de las Calzas Verdes*. The play is not a difficult one for readers who have gotten a fair start in the language, while it is a good specimen of the classic style and of the manifold kinds of dramatic verse structure. The theme turns on the ingenuity displayed by a deserted wife in following up her absconding lord, and finally in reconquering his wayward affections by means of a clever rôle in a man's attire. Thus disguised she thwarts at every turn her husband's amorous projects in fresh fields, and even succeeds in supplanting him in the affections he would fain inspire in uneligible objects; and by her Protean skill in passing from the rôle of one sex to another she effectually eludes and baffles her pursuers, who know of the mysterious character only by the distinctive *calzas verdes* of his (or rather *her*) attire, until when at the proper time the imbroglio is properly cleared up.

The editor shows a thorough knowledge of his subject, and a full working bibliography of reference matter is appended to the introduction. The latter is very good, and, for the purpose of imparting information of practical interest to the student about the life and work of the author, leaves little to be desired. But it seems singular that in the summary of Tirso's work no mention should be made of one of the most celebrated plays of the Spanish stage, and one commonly associated with Tirso's authorship—the *Burlador de Sevilla y Convidado de Piedra*, the prototype and starting-point of the long line of modern *Don Juan* relationships as expressed in literature, music, and art. True, the authorship of this play in favor of Tirso has been disputed, with some air of plausibility, on behalf of Lope or Calderón by some critics of good

standing. But until the latter make good their claim beyond doubt it would seem just not to deprive Tirso of the distinction of even possible paternity in the matter. Indeed, Cotarelo y Mori himself, in the excellent study to which the Editor acknowledges his obligations for the subject matter of his introduction, does not deny Tirso the authorship of the *Burlador*, or even seriously question it (*cf.* pp. 56, 115-121, 161).

As in his preface the editor mentions the names of several eminent persons as his literary advisors in the preparation of the work, it may seem presumptuous to raise any objection to the arrangement of the notes and vocabulary. But we venture to think that these are mutually inconsistent with each other, whatever be the class of students for which the book is specially aimed. If it is intended to meet the needs of elementary or first year learners—for whom, parenthetically, we deem such a work quite disqualified—the notes could have very profitably been fuller, introducing the explanation of occasional difficult passages with which even advanced students might find trouble. The process in question the editor avoids quite consistently throughout. As to unusual literary forms the editor says nothing about examples of metathesis occurring in the plural of the direct imperative with an enclitic pronoun, of which there are several examples in the play; *e. g.*, *tenelda* (for *tenedia*), *persuadilde*, *ponelde*. But perhaps this detail would not be considered a necessary object for the editor's solicitude. Yet the great body of students whose preparation has been from brief grammar courses would probably know nothing of the subject in question.

If the book were intended, as seems more likely, for better-prepared students—those past the point of desperate struggle with the linguistic difficulties at the expense of proper literary appreciation—we think the vocabulary is quite unnecessary, as it takes up space for a mass of simple terms of lexicography for which the ordinary dictionary is entirely sufficient; while the rare terms or peculiar expressions ordinarily occurring only once or twice in the course of the play could have been put in the notes, thereby enabling the latter to have a greater extension in other helpful directions.

The presswork and general appearance of the book are attractive, as are all the volumes of the series to which it belongs. Misprints are few. There are a couple of incorrect references in the chapter on the meter (p. xvii, iii, 13, 10, for ii, 13, 10; p. xviii, iii, 7, 1-4, for ii, etc). In the vocabulary under *hábito* reference is made to a desirable note which has been left out. Strange to say, the body of the text is not preceded by a list of the cast of characters, an omission not to be justified by any practical considerations of convenience and clearness for the reader. The notes display abundant erudition and thoroughness in the explanation of the proper names and unusual or obscure expressions recognized by the editor as coming within his province. For those qualified to study profitably the dramatic specimens of the *siglo de oro* the edition is to be highly commended.

Gil y Zárate's Guzmán el Bueno. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by SYLVESTER PRIMER. Boston: Ginn & Co. Pp. i-xx, 1-135 (text), 137-54 (notes, etc.).

THE story of *Guzmán el Bueno* is one of the most dramatic, not only in Spanish annals, but in those of any land. Unswerving devotion to duty can hardly have a finer model or persevere under more greivous temptations. For this doughty mediæval Castilian warrior preferred to witness the death of his beloved son at the hands of a perfidious enemy rather than save the life of his son on the terms of surrendering to